

## **CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method for workforce procurement and management using a  
2 hosted network application, the method comprising:
  - 3 maintaining a plurality of modules accessible at varying levels to  
4 different participants in a workforce procurement and management process, the  
5 modules comprising,
    - 6 an exchange module comprising a search function;
    - 7 a skills fulfillment module comprising,
      - 8 a skills requirement function for specifying skills  
9 required for a project; and
      - 10 a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a  
11 project;
    - 12 a resource management module comprising a work journal  
13 function for collecting information about the activity of an individual  
14 contractor;
    - 15 a knowledge management module comprising a reporting  
16 function and an analysis function; and
    - 17 maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the exchange module further  
2 comprises:
  - 3 a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a  
4 project; and
  - 5 a transaction management function for managing a hiring process  
6 including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the skills fulfillment module  
2 further comprises:
  - 3 a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;
  - 4 a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a  
5 project;

6           a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to  
7   an approved work order;

8           a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical  
9   components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,  
10   badging, and facilities;

11           a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of  
12   sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.

13           a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a  
14   contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government  
15   rules and regulations.

1           4.       The method of claim 1, wherein the resource management  
2   module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1           5.       The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of modules further  
2   comprises:

3           a supply management module comprising a supplier network function  
4   and a digital portfolio function;

5           a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench  
6   function; and

7           a common functions module comprising:  
8           an administration function;  
9           a workflow function;  
10          a catalog function; and  
11          an agreements function.

1           6.       The method of claim 1, wherein the different participants include  
2   a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an  
3   employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent  
4   workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent  
5   workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1           7.       The method of claim 6, wherein the participant includes a  
2   contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined

3 criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the  
4 predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1           8.       The method of claim 7, wherein the different participants have  
2 varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,  
3 wherein attributes include personal attributes associated with a participant, and  
4 enterprise attributes associated with an enterprise using the hosted network  
5 application.

1           9.       The method of claim 1, wherein the work journal function  
2 comprises:

3                 the contractor entering data into a work journal data entity, wherein the  
4 entered data comprises,  
5                     hours worked;  
6                     type of work done; and  
7                     comments regarding work done;  
8                 a client who is a manager reviewing the work journal data entity;  
9                 the manager approving the work journal data entity; and  
10                the manager entering comments into the work journal data entity.

1           10.      The method of claim 5, wherein the digital portfolio function  
2 comprises:

3                 populating a digital portfolio data entity with data extracted from an  
4 electronic resume;  
5                 populating the digital portfolio data entity with data from systems  
6 external to the hosted network application; and  
7                 automatically updating the digital portfolio data entity with data from  
8 the work journal data entity.

1           11.      The method of claim 1, wherein the search function comprises;  
2                 performing a search for a contractor based upon predetermined criteria  
3 entered by a participant;  
4                 performing a search for a contingent position based upon predetermined  
5 search criteria entered by the participant;

6                   searching the database, including searching a plurality of digital  
7 portfolio data entities; and  
8                   searching a plurality of public databases that are not part of the hosted  
9 application.

1                 12.     The method of claim 3, wherein the work order function  
2 comprises;

3                   a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for  
4 a contractor;

5                   at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in  
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;

7                   if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level  
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and

9                   collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to  
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses  
11 the collected data.

1                 13.     The method of claim 12, wherein the work order function further  
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work  
3 order is approved.

1                 14.     The method of claim 1, wherein the settlement function  
2 comprises:

3                   submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing  
4 supplier associated with the contractor;

5                   generating an invoice;

6                   submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;

7                   if the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for  
8 processing;

9                   storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein  
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1                 15.     The method of claim 3, wherein the request for proposal function  
2 comprises:

3 receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent  
4 workers and their associated skills;

5 linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes  
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;

7 generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project  
8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;

9 broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly  
10 accessible applications;

11 receiving responses to the request for proposal;

12 conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal  
13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the reporting function comprises  
2 generating at least one report using data including data generated by the  
3 plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein the analysis function comprises:  
2 automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon  
3 criteria selected by a participant; and  
4 the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the  
5 analysis.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the hosted network application  
2 is hosted on the Internet.

1 19. A system for workforce procurement and management using a  
2 hosted network application, comprising:  
3 a plurality of web servers for hosting a workforce procurement and  
4 management application;  
5 at least one database server;  
6 at least one database for storing a plurality of data including the  
7 workforce procurement and management application, wherein the workforce  
8 procurement and management application includes a plurality of modules

9       accessible at varying levels to different participants in a hosted workforce  
10      procurement and management process, the modules comprising,  
11            an exchange module comprising a search function;  
12            a skills fulfillment module comprising,  
13            a skills requirement function for specifying skills  
14      required for a project; and  
15            a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a  
16      project;  
17            resource management module comprising a work journal  
18      function for collecting information about the activity of an individual  
19      contractor;  
20            a knowledge management module comprising a reporting  
21      function and an analysis function; and  
22            maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

1       20.      The system of claim 19, wherein the exchange module further  
2      comprises:  
3            a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a  
4      project; and  
5            a transaction management function for managing a hiring process  
6      including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

1       21.      The system of claim 19, wherein the skills fulfillment module  
2      further comprises:  
3            a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;  
4            a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a  
5      project;  
6            a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to  
7      an approved work order;  
8            a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical  
9      components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,  
10     badging, and facilities;

11           a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of  
12   sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.

13           a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a  
14   contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government  
15   rules and regulations.

1           22.    The system of claim 19, wherein the resource management  
2   module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1           23.    The system of claim 19, wherein the plurality of modules further  
2   comprises:

3           a supply management module comprising a supplier network function  
4   and a digital portfolio function;

5           a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench  
6   function; and

7           a common functions module comprising:

8           an administration function;

9           a workflow function;

10           a catalog function; and

11           an agreements function.

1           24.    The system of claim 19, wherein the different participants  
2   include a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an  
3   employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent  
4   workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent  
5   workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1           25.    The system of claim 24, wherein the participant includes a  
2   contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined  
3   criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the  
4   predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1           26.    The system of claim 25, wherein the different participants have  
2   varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,

3 wherein attributes include personal attributes associated with a participant, and  
4 enterprise attributes associated with an enterprise using the hosted network  
5 application.

1 27. The system of claim 19, wherein the work journal function  
2 comprises:

3 the contractor entering data into a work journal data entity, wherein the  
4 entered data comprises,  
5 hours worked;  
6 type of work done; and  
7 comments regarding work done;  
8 a client who is a manager reviewing the work journal data entity;  
9 the manager approving the work journal data entity; and  
10 the manager entering comments into the work journal data entity.

1 28. The system of claim 23, wherein the digital portfolio function  
2 comprises:

3 populating a digital portfolio data entity with data extracted from an  
4 electronic resume;  
5 populating the digital portfolio data entity with data from systems  
6 external to the hosted network application; and  
7 automatically updating the digital portfolio data entity with data from  
8 the work journal data entity.

1 29. The system of claim 19, wherein the search function comprises;  
2 performing a search for a contractor based upon predetermined criteria  
3 entered by a participant;  
4 performing a search for a contingent position based upon predetermined  
5 search criteria entered by the participant;  
6 searching the database, including searching a plurality of digital  
7 portfolio data entities; and  
8 searching a plurality of public databases that are not part of the hosted  
9 application.

1           30. The system of claim 21, wherein the work order function  
2 comprises;  
3           a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for  
4 a contractor;  
5           at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in  
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;  
7           if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level  
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and  
9           collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to  
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses  
11 the collected data.

1           31. The system of claim 30, wherein the work order function further  
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work  
3 order is approved.

1           32. The system of claim 19, wherein the settlement function  
2 comprises:  
3           submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing  
4 supplier associated with the contractor;  
5           generating an invoice;  
6           submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;  
7           if the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for  
8 processing;  
9           storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein  
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1           33. The system of claim 21, wherein the request for proposal  
2 function comprises:  
3           receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent  
4 workers and their associated skills;  
5           linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes  
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;

7           generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project  
8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;  
9           broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly  
10 accessible applications;  
11           receiving responses to the request for proposal;  
12           conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal  
13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1           34.       The system of claim 19, wherein the reporting function  
2 comprises generating at least one report using data including data generated by  
3 the plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1           35.       The system of claim 19, wherein the analysis function comprises:  
2           automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon  
3 criteria selected by a participant; and  
4           the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the  
5 analysis.

1           36.       The system of claim 19, wherein the hosted network application  
2 is hosted on the Internet.

1           37.       An electromagnetic medium containing executable instructions  
2 which, when executed in a processing system, cause the system to perform  
3 workforce management, wherein performing workforce procurement comprises:  
4           receiving a staffing requirement for a projects;  
5           searching a database of digital portfolios to find at least one suitable  
6 contractor for the project;  
7           filling the staffing requirement with the at least one contractor; and  
8           automatically updating a digital portfolio of the at least one contractor  
9 using data entered by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of  
10 the at least one contractor.

1           38.       The electromagnetic medium of claim 37, wherein performing  
2 workforce management further comprises maintaining a work journal for the at

3 least one contractor, including automatically updating work journal, using data  
4 input by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of the at least one  
5 contractor regarding job performance of the at least one contractor.

1           39.     The electromagnetic medium of claim 38, wherein performing  
2 workforce management further comprises generating payments to the at least  
3 one contractor and to third parties using data from the work journal and invoice  
4 data entered by a manager.

1           40.     The electromagnetic medium of claim 39, wherein performing  
2 workforce management further comprises generating reports regarding the  
3 project using data from the work journal.